



knowledge of the canon, although, she wrote, he “gives the impression of considering himself the undisputed authority on the subject of Sherlock Holmes and his domicile.”

“I’m happy to call myself a rank amateur,” Aidiniantz replies.

For verisimilitude, most Sherlockians prefer the Sherlock Holmes Pub, on Northumberland Street, just below Trafalgar Square, which is packed with Holmesiana, including a facsimile head of the Hound of the Baskervilles and Watson’s “newly framed portrait of General Gordon,” the



Holmes has enjoyed a stellar career on-screen (clockwise from top left: portrayed by Basil Rathbone, 1939; Jeremy Brett, 1984–94; John Cleese, 1973; Michael Caine, 1988; Robert Downey Jr. in the latest film version). All of the incarnations owe much to a real-life medical school professor, Dr. Joseph Bell, whose “eerie trick of spotting details” Conan Doyle never forgot.

British commander killed in 1885 at the siege of Khartoum and mentioned in “The Cardboard Box” and “The Resident Patient.” The collection also includes Holmes’ handcuffs, and posters, photographs and memorabilia from movies and plays recreating the Holmes stories. Upstairs, behind a glass wall, is a far more faithful replica of the 221B sitting room.

IN 1891, FOLLOWING the breakout success of *The Sign of Four*, Conan Doyle moved with his wife, Louise, from Southsea to Montague Place in Bloomsbury, around the corner from the British Museum. He opened an ophthalmological practice at 2 Upper Wimpole Street in Marylebone, a mile away. (In his memoirs, Conan Doyle mistakenly referred to the address as 2 Devonshire Place. The undistinguished, red-brick town house still stands, marked by a plaque put up by the Westminster City Council and the Arthur Conan Doyle Society.) The young author secured one of London’s best-known literary agents, A.P. Watt, and made a deal with *The Strand*, a new monthly magazine, to write a series of short stories starring Holmes. Fortunately for his growing fan base, Conan

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